

Also, the Examiner indicated that all claims lacked inventiveness in view of Meyer, et al, Langford, et al. (United States Patent No. 5,583,476), and Wetzel, et al. (United States Patent No. 5,428,534) in various combinations.

As indicated in Claim 1, the vehicle impact sensing system of the present invention is one which includes at least one bend sensitive resistance element disposed along a structural element of the vehicle. Applicants have herein amended Claim 1 to indicate the preference for a strip of conductive ink containing a plurality of cracks in the bend sensitive resistance element. As indicated in the Specification as originally filed, the use of a sensor containing such a conductive ink strip is the preferred embodiment of the present invention. Also, as indicated in the Written Opinion, "Meyer, et al. ... fails to teach the specific sensor used by applicant." As such, amended Claim 1, and consequently all dependent claims, meet the novelty requirement of Article 33(2).

Furthermore, Meyer and Langford are completely devoid of any motivation or suggestion to combine the teachings of the two references. Also, both references fail to disclose and fail to motivate or suggest the use of " ... a plurality of individual sensors horizontally disposed on a flexible substrate ...", as specifically required by dependent Claim 3. Independent Claims 8 and 15 similarly require "... a plurality of deformation sensor elements horizontally disposed along a structural element of said vehicle ..." The Wetzel reference fails to compensate for the defects of the Langford reference because it too fails to teach the use of a plurality of deformation sensor elements horizontally disposed along a structural element. Furthermore, the Wetzel reference also fails to motivate or suggest such an arrangement of deformation sensor elements.

The horizontal arrangement of a plurality of sensor elements allows the impact sensing system of the present invention to achieve a degree of azimuthal resolution. This

advancement over the prior art allows for more effective deployment decisions by the system.

In view of the above amendments and remarks it is respectfully submitted that the present form of the claims meets the criteria of the PCT and that a favorable International Preliminary Examination Report is now warranted with respect to all of the claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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